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Big iDeas at SMU: A Review of SMU's Current Smoking Policy

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A Review of SMU's Current Smoking Policy

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Faculty Cooperators

- Megan Knapp, M.P.H., Health Educator, SMU Memorial Health Center
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The Problem

On June 27, 2006, the Surgeon General issued a report indicating that there is no safe level of exposure to tobacco smoke. SMU's current Smoking Policy was last revised May 4, 1998. Because of new medical, legal, and social indicators, our team believes that a review of that Smoking Policy is needed.

Methodology

The first undertaking of our team will be to accomplish a cursory review of medical science, health, sociological, and legal literature concerning the causes and effects of smoking and second-hand smoke. This will provide the proper context with regard to health issues that should drive any recommendation concerning smoking and/or tobacco use in general and some understanding of the legal and social issues that might best produce a fair recommendation from our team. Smoking policies of some other colleges and universities will also be reviewed and compared to SMU's current policy. Depending on what we learn, it might be worthwhile to study another university's smoking policy decision in detail. Input will be obtained through on-campus open forums, e-mail questionnaires, and through meeting with constituency groups including students, alumni, faculty, administration, and local community and religious leaders. On-campus forums might necessitate medical or legal experts to moderate such sessions.

Rationale

The University has an obligation to anyone on University grounds whether student, faculty member, administrator/employee, or visitor to provide a safe, healthy, and hazard-free environment. A smoking policy should help insure that the University meets that obligation.

Smoking policy impacts the quality of life of both those who choose to smoke and those who choose not to smoke. Smoking policy may also impact whether individuals choose to smoke or choose not to smoke.

Smoking policy is an emotionally charged issue and, consequently, a simple, well-reasoned policy is required for its acceptance.

Proposed Time Line

Work will begin immediately on a First Phase of the Project: 1) A first group will find, index, and classify background information providing context by reviewing scientific medical science, health, sociological, and legal literature; 2) a second group will investigate and document smoking policy of a group of at least eight other colleges and universities. The First Phase will be completed before Spring Break.

During the Second Phase of the Project the team members will meet personally with different constituency groups and poll groups and individuals via an e-mail questionnaire. Should the Team think it beneficial, an in-depth review of and a visit to another university's campus to meet with policy makers will take place. The Second Phase of the Project will be completed by the first two weeks of April.

The Third Phase of the Project will include an open on-campus Forum. This will take place during the last two weeks of April.

The Final Phase of the Project will require the preparation of a written report that includes the contextual overview, the findings with regard to other colleges and universities policies, the data collected regarding each stakeholder's preference on policy, and finally a recommendation of a Smoking Policy that the Team feels should be implemented by the University. The Final Phase of the Project will be completed by the end of the 2009 Spring Term.

A Further Objective

While our team hopes to successfully review SMU's Smoking Policy, our team does not have the time or resources to review the policies of countless universities, communities, or cities.

We do, however, expect to develop a link. This link, whether with the American Lung Association or another influential organization, will ensure that our experience at SMU with this reviewing process benefits other universities, communities, and cities.

Anticipated Budget

Travel	\$500.00
Data Collection	\$500.00
Presentation/Final Report	\$1,000.00
Experts/Expenses	\$3,000.00
Total Anticipated Budget	\$5,000.00

Person responsible for funds: Grayson P. Walker